A

SECOND LETTER

FROM

Major SCOTT to Mr. FOX,

CONTAINING THE

FINAL DECISION

OF THE

Governor General and Council of *Bengal*

ON THE

Charges brought againſt Rajah Deby Sing.

LONDON:

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FEB

A SECOND LETTER TO MR. FOX.

SIR,

THE very favourable reception with which my laſt Letter has been received by the Public, induces me to take the liberty of addreſſing you once more, in conſequence of the advices lately received from Bengal.

In the laſt year, I had recourſe to every official document which the India Houſe afforded, and to every other poſſible channel of information that could enable me to ſtate, fairly and correctly, the whole ſtory of Deby Sing. A final judgment was pronounced in Bengal, in the month of November laſt; every material upon which

that judgment was founded is in England, at the preſent moment: I have not written a word which is not fully juſtified both by the evidence, and the deciſion of the Government of Bengal founded upon that evidence; and I moſt anxiouſly deſire, that the ſtricteſt examination of every aſſertion that I have made may take place, being confident that there is not a line in my laſt Letter which will not ſtand the teſt of the moſt critical ſcrutiny.

You will be pleaſed to recollect, if you have done me the honour to peruſe my Letter, that as to any argument which I uſed, the guilt or innocence of Deby Sing was a matter of the moſt perfect indifference. Had his guilt been eſtabliſhed, after ſo ſevere a trial, Mr. Haſtings's opinion of the man would have been fully juſtified. If, on the contrary, he had been acquitted of all the charges, as he has been

been of the moſt material of them, it would have proved, that Mr. Haſtings had formed an erroneous judgment of the man, in common with every other member of the Government; for all were equally ſhocked by the horrid relations contained in Mr. Patterſon's reports. The only fact of importance is this, that neither Mr. Haſtings, nor any one Engliſh gentleman, appears to be in the ſlighteſt degree implicated in the criminality of Deby Sing, and of courſe Mr. Burke's ſtatements were wholly unfounded.

I can now affirm with confidence, that the following facts are fully proved:

1ſt, That Mr. Haſtings did not originally appoint Deby Sing to be farmer, or ſecurity for Rungpore and Dinagepore, and that Mr. Burke had clear evidence upon this point when he ſpoke laſt year in Weſtminſter Hall.

2dly,

2dly, That when the inſurrection in Rungpore broke out, and an enquiry into the cauſes of it was ordered, Mr. Haſtings himſelf propoſed the removal of Deby Sing, from a conviction that no fair enquiry could take place while he remained in office.

3dly, That Deby Sing is proved to be innocent of almoſt all the dreadful cruelties imputed to him.

4thly, That the moſt dreadful of the cruelties imputed to him, had, to uſe Mr. Shore's expreſſion, no exiſtence whatever.

And 5thly, That if the whole had been true, to the utmoſt extent of Mr. Burke's original relation, it would be impoſſible for the ingenuity or malice of man to impute the ſlighteſt blame upon Mr. Haſtings, or to make him a participator in the crimes of which Deby Sing was accuſed.

Theſe facts being true, the proof of them being eſtabliſhed beyond the power of cavil or contradiction, I am juſtified in ſaying, that Parliament has been diſgraced, degraded, and diſhonoured, not only in Great Britain, but throughout Europe; ſince there is hardly a remote village in any part of the Continent, which the deteſtable ſtories of the nipples, and the torches, have not reached. The refutation, I hope, will extend as far as the miſrepreſentation: I, for one, who feel for the honour of my country, will ſpare no pains to reſcue it from the unmerited ſlander which Mr. Burke has uttered againſt it.

It has pleaſed Providence to continue to us for twenty-four years the poſſeſſion of a fertile and extenſive empire in India, containing, upon the moſt moderate computation, twelve millions of people, famed, as Mr. Burke once ſaid, for all the arts of poliſhed life, while we were yet in the woods.

woods. A certain Party in this country have thought it right, for ſome political purpoſe or other, to repreſent this as a deſolate, ruined, depopulated country, groaning under the ſeverity of Britiſh oppreſſion, and injuſtice. The confidence with which theſe aſſertions are made is moſt extraordinary; they are as contrary to fact, as to common ſenſe. It has been my conſtant endeavour to convince the nation of what I know to be true, that population, and agriculture, have greatly increaſed during our government. If the fact could admit of a doubt, it would be cleared up by a document received in the laſt week from Bengal, which ſpeaks ſo ſtrongly to the common ſenſe of mankind, that I ſhall apply it to the juſtification of my former aſſertions.

Sir John Macpherſon, after the departure of Mr. Haſtings, appointed a gentleman of intenſe application to a very conſiderable office

office in the revenue branch of his adminiſtration. In the courſe of his reſearches he has, on the 30th October laſt, written a long letter to Earl Cornwallis on the ſalt plan eſtabliſhed by Mr. Haſtings in 1780; and after ſpeaking of it in warm terms, and taking notice of the annual conſumption of ſalt in Bengal, as appeared from evidence many years ago, he has the following paſſage:

"NEVERTHELESS, though ſuch evi-
"dence might be conſidered as deciſive
"proof of the facts ſet forth in the period
"ſtated, it by no means ſeemed appli-
"cable to preſent circumſtances. A lapſe
"of fifteen years, under the lenity of the
"Engliſh government, had certainly ope-
"rated a very material change in the ſtate
"of things. Greater ſecurity and freedom
"in agriculture, manufactures, and com-
"merce, increaſed conſiderably the popu-
"lation of the country, with the wealth
"and proſperity of its inhabitants; an ad-
"ditional conſumption of all the neceſſa-

"ries of life was a natural conſequence, "and fully evinced the improved condi- "tion of the Britiſh provinces."

Permit me now to ſtate to you the ſeveral documents which have the ſlighteſt reference to the ſtory of Deby Sing.

1ſt, The evidence delivered to the Committee of Managers by Mr. David Anderſon.

2d, The ſeveral letters and conſultations between the month of April and May 1781, when the farms were granted to Deby Sing, and February 1783, when the inſurrection broke out in Rungpore.

3d, The papers and minutes relative to Mr. Paterſon's deputation, and Deby Sing's removal from all official truſts, on the propoſition of Mr. Haſtings.

4th, The ſeveral reports of Mr. Paterſon, the Committee of Revenue's remarks upon them, and the proceedings of the Supreme Council.

5th, The appointment of three Commiſſioners to inveſtigate the complaints upon oath.

6th, The voluminous reports of the Commiſſioners.

7th, The abſtract, and remarks, of the preparer of reports.

8th, The ſeveral petitions of Deby Sing, earneſtly praying for a deciſion.

9th, The ſeveral minutes of Mr. Shore, Mr. Stuart, and Earl Cornwallis, previous to their final judgment.

10th, The unanimous opinion of the Governor General and Council, which finally cloſed the whole proceeding.

Mr. Shore has examined every charge with the utmoſt care and attention. His minute is very long, very intereſting, full of important information, and cloſes in the following manner:

Bengal Revenue Consultations, the 26th November 1788.

(Extract of Mr. Shore's Minute.)

I CANNOT conclude without an additional remark, that there never was a cause which appears to have been more thoroughly investigated, or more impartially conducted. Every member of the existing government at the time *, it is notorious, had formed a decisive opinion against Deby Sing, in consequence of Mr. Paterson's reports; and the measures adopted were conformable to these sentiments, and calculated to shew that, if proved guilty, he had no mercy to expect. It was under this decided and avowed disapprobation of Government that the Commissioners reluctantly undertook an investigation of this cause. Their proceedings, in my opinion, do equal credit to their integrity and to their understandings. Facts are not left to bare asser-

* Messs. Hastings, Wheler, Macpherson, and Stables.

tion

tion for ſupport. Every charge (and ſome not ſpecifically pointed out to the Commiſſioners) is examined with ſcrupulous accuracy; and wherever evidence could be obtained, it has been ſought for, and brought forward. The proceedings are not ſummary, but voluminous and minute; and if the conduct of any Zemindar or farmer in the country were to paſs an inveſtigation of the ſame nature, I may venture to aſſert that he would not be deemed innocent.

The tranſactions in Dhee Jumla being wholly unconnected with the proceedings in Rungpore, I have followed the example of the Commiſſioners, in conſidering them ſeparately. Their report is ſo full, clear, and deciſive, that I ſhall content myſelf with referring to that in ſupport of my opinion, which is, that Deby Sing, ſo far from being culpable in any inſtance alleged againſt him, appears to have been moderate in his demands for rent, attentive to the complaints preferred, and to have puniſhed

nished the persons proved to have oppressed the Ryots, on their complaints. I am happy also to remark, that many of the worst accusations preferred against him appear to have had no existence whatever.

Kerperam and Ramnarain, Deep Chund, and Basdeo Doss, merit exemplary punishment; and I regret that the two former only are subject to the power of the Board.

(Signed) J. Shore.

Dhee Jumla is the district in which those dreadful cruelties were said to be perpetrated, which Mr. Burke detailed, as if they had been facts proved and substantiated by evidence. I never had the slightest correspondence with Mr. Shore, directly or indirectly, relative to Deby Sing; nor indeed was it possible that he should have read in November in Bengal, a Letter that I was writing at Margate in September; yet it is remarkable how precisely that

gentleman

gentleman coincides with me: I have ſaid, that the moſt dreadful of the cruelties ſtated by Mr. Burke *never were committed at all:* Mr. Shore ſays, "I am happy to remark, that "many of *the worſt* accuſations againſt him "*appear to have had no exiſtence whatever.*"

Upon a review of the whole proceedings every rational man will conclude, that Mr. Haſtings and his Council in 1783, Sir John Macpherſon when he was Governor General, and Earl Cornwallis ſince that period, and the Gentlemen who compoſe the government of Bengal, have ſhewn the moſt laudable and anxious deſire to do ſtrict and impartial juſtice, after the fulleſt and completeſt inveſtigation of the ſubject. The reflections, therefore, which Mr. Burke threw out upon Mr. Haſtings, and the Members of the Supreme Council, upon Mr. Anderſon, Mr. Shore, and the Commiſſioners who examined the whole upon oath, were illiberal, unjuſt, and ill-founded. A reference to Mr. Gurney's notes will ſhew you, that if

thoſe

thoſe reflections were juſt, the ſolemn enquiry that took place was a mere farce, ordered ſolely for the purpoſe of protecting Deby Sing.

"I ſuppoſe there never was a country upon earth in which delegated power has not occaſionally been abuſed; but never were greater pains taken to detect abuſe of power in any country, than were taken during the adminiſtration of Mr. Haſtings, when he ſuppoſed that the oppreſſions of Deby Sing excited an inſurrection in a diſtant province. But the difference between Mr. Burke's mode of proceeding and Mr. Haſtings's is this: The latter, *though he formed a decided opinion againſt Deby Sing in his own mind*, ordered an inquiry; the former meets with accuſations on a ſubject *that has no reference to the cauſe before him*, but, as they are calculated to make a temporary impreſſion, he eagerly ſeizes upon them, details them as facts eſtabliſhed by proof, applies them to Mr. Haſtings, endeavours to excite

the

the popular indignation againſt him, though he knew that if all the facts ſhould hereafter be proved, they could no more affect Mr. Haſtings than they could injure me.

I will not detain you longer, Sir, than juſt to obſerve, that no Engliſh gentleman of any rank or ſtation appears to have been in the ſlighteſt degree involved in any one of thoſe acts which are deemed reprehenſible in Deby Sing; and that when the magnitude of the charges which were preferred againſt him are conſidered, it is a matter of aſtoniſhment that he ſhould have been ſo innocent in all the moſt eſſential points; but whether he was innocent or guilty, acquitted upon ſome charges, and fined for his conduct in other inſtances, does not ſignify one ſtraw to Mr. Burke, or to me. The reſult of the enquiry does infinite honour to the Britiſh adminiſtration in Bengal; every ſtep taken in the courſe of it, by Mr. Haſtings and Sir John Macpherſon, does equal honour to them; and I defy Mr. Burke to bring proof of the

ſlighteſt attempt, or deſire, in any one Engliſhman, to ſuppreſs, mutilate, or garble one tittle of the evidence upon this great cauſe.

To conclude; every ſentence in my former Letter is now confirmed, and I have fairly convicted Mr. Burke of aſſerting, in ſome inſtances, what he knew to be unfounded at the time he aſſerted them, and in others, of ſtating acts of great enormity as facts proved and eſtabliſhed, which, upon the moſt ſolemn inveſtigation, turn out *to have had no exiſtence whatever.*

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your moſt obedient,

Humble ſervant,

JOHN SCOTT.

RESOLUTIONS *of the Governor General in Council, on the Report of the Commiſſioners deputed to inquire into the Cauſes of the Inſurrection in Rungpore, during the Adminiſtration of Rajah Deby Sing.*

IN paſſing a deciſion upon a cauſe of ſo complicated a nature as that before them, the Board cannot but expreſs their ſenſe of the difficulties attending it. Without recapitulating the particulars of tranſactions which have already been ſo minutely diſcuſſed, they ſhall premiſe ſuch general obſervations only as may point out the principles on which their judgment is formed.

The Zemindars of Rungpore, although the complainants againſt oppreſſion and extortion, can by no means be conſidered

as entirely innocent, ſince the very facts which they impute to others, are proved in part to have been practiſed by themſelves, long before their connexion with Deby Sing.

On the contrary, it is clearly eſtabliſhed, that they were cruelly and oppreſſively treated in 1188, and ſeverely uſed in 1189.

Although much of the criminality alleged againſt Deby Sing is not ſubſtantiated by the inveſtigation of the Commiſſioners, his conduct is by no means innocent, admitting even a diſtinction between his own acts, and his reſponſibility for the conduct of Hurram: To aſſign to him the culpability of every ſpecific act of cruelty exerciſed by Hurram, under the circumſtances of the evidence before the Board, would in their opinion be unjuſt; he is certainly chargeable for every inſtance where knowledge and connivance can be proved, or

 inferred,

inferred, and may be ſo in ſome degree where they are preſumable from the nature and notoriety of the acts committed. In what he himſelf did, as far as thoſe acts are criminal, there can be no doubt of his reſponſibility.

With reſpect to Hurram, the proofs are ſpecific; and he, as the moſt culpable, merits the greateſt puniſhment.

In addition to theſe conſiderations, the length of time that has elapſed ſince the cauſe commenced, the confinement and degradation of Deby Sing *, and the loſs ſuſtained by him in his property, by the mode in which ſecurity was demanded and taken, are alſo to be weighed.

The Board having conſidered the whole, reſolved as follows:

1ſt, That the purchaſes of land made by Deby Sing in the name of his houſe-

* In the adminiſtration of Mr. Haſtings.

hold

hold Bramin, Deby Dut Doby, and by Coſhaul Chund, be declared invalid, and that the lands be reſtored to Zemindars, the proprietors thereof, without any compenſation.

2d, That all the purchaſes of lands made by Hurram in his own name, or for himſelf in that of others (thoſe of Kankneah excepted, ſold by order of the late Committee of Revenue), be alſo annihilated; and that the lands be reſtored reſpectively to the Zemindars, the proprietors thereof.

3d, That Deby Sing be compelled to repay to the other purchaſers of land ſold in liquidation of the balances of 1188 (with an exception of Kankneah), the amount of their ſeveral purchaſes, and that the lands be again reſtored to the Zemindars. The poſſeſſors are not to be made anſwerable for their collections during the time.

That

That the reſtitution of the lands take place at the commencement of the enſuing Bengal year.

4th, That the mortgage bonds be declared invalid, and if exiſting, that they be deſtroyed.

5th, That Deby Sing be compelled to refund the following ſums improperly demanded and taken by him:

Aumalnamah Fee,	2911	1	8
Ruſſoom Muſtagerry,	1175	0	3 3
Chundeh, -	393		
Batta on the Narrany Rs.	18108	10	13 1
Exceſs of Batta in two Pergunnahs, -	799	15	2 2

6th, That Deby Sing be compelled to pay to Gunganarain Gomaſtah of Colly Perſhaud, Zemindar of the four annas diviſion of Carjehaut, the ſum of 1000 S[a] R[s], as

as damages for the ſeverities uſed towards him.

7th, That Deby Sing be made reſponſible for the Charges incurred on account of Mr. Paterſon's deputation to Rungpore, from the date thereof, viz. the 17th Feb. 1783, until the appointment of the new commiſſion on the 14th April 1784.

8th, That the amount which Deby Sing is ordered to refund, be deducted from the ſums which he has depoſited as a ſecurity for the balances of Rungpore on account of 1188 and 1189; and that the remainder, after ſuch deductions, and after ſatisfying any claims of balances which the Government may have againſt him on account of Dinagepore for 1188 and 1189, and for Rungpore on account of 1188, be returned of him.

9th,

9th, That Hurram be compelled to refund to the Zemindars the amount of Lewaie Rozenamcha, respectively deducted from their payments in 1198, and Surjanarain, the amount received in 1189.

10th, That Hurram be immediately taken into confinement, and do remain confined, without any distinction, with the other prisoners in the Foujedarry gaol of Rungpore, for one year, and that he be released at the expiration of that period, and required to leave the districts of Rungpore and Dinagepore, and never to return to them, under pain of being apprehended and committed to the Foujedarry gaol; that measures be immediately adopted for obtaining from him the several sums for which he is declared responsible by these resolutions, by the attachment of his property if necessary; and that he further be declared for ever incapable of holding any

charge in the collections, or any office under the government whatever.

11th, That Hurram be further compelled to pay the following ſums to the ſeveral perſons upon whom he inflicted the puniſhments of the cauttah, charch, chongeree, and moradkhannee, viz.

	Rupees.
Seeb Chund Chowdry, - -	400
Gour Mohun, Gomaſtah of the Zemindar of Carjeehaut, - -	400
Bowanny Sircar, Gomaſtah of Seeb Chund Chowdry, - -	200
Keſhenchund Goopt, Gomaſtah of Rameadangah, - -	200
Kaltoo Chowdry, Gomaſtah of 3½ Anna diviſion of Futtepore, -	200
Jogul Doſs, Gomaſtah of Tepah, -	200
Ramkiſſen, Gomaſtah of Pangah, -	200
Govind Mozundar, Naib to Gour Mohun, - - -	200
Hurlott, Gomaſtah of the Zemindar of Kankneah, - -	200

12th, That the ſums which Deby Sing is required to refund by the fifth reſolution, be paid to Government, and carried to the credit of the Zemindars of Rungpore, in part payment of the balances due from them on account 1189; and that the remaining balances, after deducting the ſums above-mentioned claimed from the Zemindars of Rungpore for 1188 and 1189, be remitted to them, and that they be declared releaſed from all further reſponſibility for them.

13th, That Derjanarrain be releaſed from his confinement, upon expreſs condition that he never returns to Rungpore or Dinagepore, under the penalty of being committed to the Foujedarry gaol if he ſhould be found in either of thoſe diſtricts.

14th, That Rajib, Surdar of Buddutta; Keena, of Cutchua; Coneh, Sircar and Gopaul of Dimlah; be alſo releaſed, and re-

quired to leave the diſtricts of Rungpore and Dinagepore, and never to reſide in them, under penalty of being apprehended and committed to gaol.

15th, That Kirparam and Ramnarain, the only two perſons concerned in the commiſſion of the cruelties in Dhee Jumla and Dinagepore who could be apprehended, be ſent to Dhee Jumla, and having there received twenty ſtripes each with a rattan, they be drummed round the diſtrict, and ordered to quit it for ever.

Rev. Depart.

(A true Copy.)

(Signed) G. H. BARLOW,
Sub-Secretary.

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CONTAINING

CONTENTS.

CHAP. I.—Comparison between New Holland and other Continents. [illegible] discovered at different Times.—Dampier's Ship [illegible] Fleet shipwrecked upon the Coast.—Accounts of the Dutch Navigators erroneous, or supported by no Details.—Discoveries in these Parts not encouraged by Spain.

CHAP. II.—Dampier twice on the Coast of New Holland; his Account of the Country, its Inhabitants and Productions.

CHAP. III.—Cloate's Ship. Great Length of Dampier's Coast. Figures of a Channel dividing New Holland.—Discovery of Van Diemen's Land.—Accounts of that Country by Captains Cook and Furneaux.

CHAP. IV.—Description of the Inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land by Captain Cook.—Remarks by Mr. Anderson on the Country, Productions, Inhabitants, and Language.

CHAP. V.—New South Wales discovered by Captain Cook.—Marks of the Coast from Point Hicks to Botany Bay.—Account of the Inhabitants [illegible]

CHAP. VI.—Description of Botany Bay.—Birds and Productions of the adjacent Country.—Remarks on the Coast from Botany Bay Northward.—Dampier's Description of Boobies.—Captain Cook sails to Bustard Bay.—Range from thence to Thirsty Sound.

CHAP. VII.—Description of Thirsty Sound.—Range from thence Northward.—Captain Cook lands a fourth Time.—Enters Endeavour River.—Dangers in approaching that Harbour.

CHAP. VIII.—Description of Endeavour River.—Animals found there.—Vegetables and other Productions.—Inhabitants.

CHAP. IX.—Further Account of the Inhabitants.—Their Language.—Soil of the Country about Endeavour River.—Dangerous Shoals to the North of that Harbour.—Lizard Point.—Possession Island.—Remarks on the Coast.

CHAP. X.—Miscellaneous Remarks.—Face of the Country.—Harbours, Vegetables, [illegible] Natives.—Conclusion.